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THE BLIND AMERICAN

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Editor: Floyd W. Matson

Executive Secretary: Anthony Mannino, 205 South Western Avenue, Room 206, Los Angeles 4, Calif.

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"SNARE 16": THE WORSE COMES TO THE WORST

(Editor's note: The following is a special legislative bulletin issued in October by President Russell Kletzing of the National Federation of the Blind with reference to the recent official "interpretation" of the newly enacted public assistance Title XVI. THE BLIND AMERICAN herewith endorses the analysis and recommendations of the NFB report, and urges its readers to participate in the campaign of the organized blind to reverse the federal ruling.)

The worst fears of the organized blind, with respect to the new title XVI under public assistance, have now been realized. In an official bulletin "interpreting: the 1962 Public Welfare Amendments, the Federal Department of Health, Education and Welfare has made abundantly clear the full and disastrous consequences for the blind of this so-called "optional" provision for a combined state plan embracing aid to the blind, the aged and the disabled.

Despite its own earlier protestations to the contrary, and despite the absence of any wording in the law to support it, the Department has ruled that the combined state plan filed under title XVI must lay down a "common standard" for determining need and payments for all three adult categories. Furthermore, there must be identical provisions governing property holdings as well as lien and recovery provisions. "Any reduction in payment must be common."

In short, except as otherwise provided in the federal law that conditions of eligibility, standards for determining need and payment, the HEW administrators now insist payment for the aged, the blind and the disabled under the new title must be exactly the same.

The federal ruling, contained in the Department's State Letter 582, flies in the face of previous assurances to Congress and the public by the same officials that the proposed joint category would be merely a bookkeeping arrangement intended to simplify the administration of public assistance by furnishing a convenient package plan for federal financial participation for all three adult categories.

The new interpretation confirms the gravest apprehensions of the National Federation of the Blind -- expressed many times over in legislative bulletins and congressional testimony during deliberations on the public welfare bill -- that adoption of this joint category would encourage the complete scrambling of Aid to the Blind with Old Age Assistance and Aid to the Permanently and Totally Disabled, in terms of budgetary procedures, rule and regulatory material, and actual administration of the program.

Under this requirement of a common standard for determining eligibility, need and the grant, the tendency in all those states -- 47 in number -- where average payments to the blind are higher, inevitably will be to cut back aid to the blind to the level of the other adult categories. In terms of the national average (as of December, 1961), this amounts to a reduction of no less than \$11 in the individual monthly aid grant.

To be sure, while the blind recipient is losing \$11, his state will gain \$7.50 in federal matching contribution toward his medical care. Thus the main inducement held out by the proponents of title XVI -- the prospect of additional money for medical care -- is seen to be cancelled out on this basis alone. The objective of the National Federation of the Blind is, of course, to gain by federal amendment this additional medical assistance under the established category of title X, while retaining all our previous hard-won advances and distinctions.

Moreover, once a state has consolidated its adult programs under title XVI the action is final and irreversible. It may never again revert to the old plan of separate categories. "If payments are made to a State for combined plan under title XVI," say federal administrators, "it cannot also receive payments for a separate plan under title I, including medical assistance for the aged, X or XIV, either concurrently or subsequently."

It is notable that the HEW statement recognizes an exception to its common-standard requirement with respect to the five states which have separate state agencies or commissions for the blind (Delaware, Massachusetts, New Jersey, North Carolina and Virginia). "In states which have a separate agency for the blind," the Federal Letter reads, "the standard for the blind can be different from the standard for the aged and disabled." But if these five states can have different standards for the blind -- if, in other

words, the differing objectives and characteristics of the blind program are recognized as valid for these five states -- why is this principle not extended to the remaining 45 states as well? We believe that it should be and that it must be.

The immediate effect of this shocking federal interpretation, to repeat, can only be to wipe out the gains which the blind have made with respect to the standard of assistance, property holdings, lien and recovery and other provisions.

The long-range effect, still more disastrous, will be to make virtually impossible any future improvement of state blind-aid laws when under title XVI, since any gains made for the blind would have perforce to be extended simultaneously to the vastly larger numbers of old-age and disabled recipients -- whether or not the latter two categories, with their different objectives, would benefit from such improvements.

Still other destructive consequences may be anticipated as a result of the enactment of title XVI and more especially of this official ruling. But enough has been said to demonstrate that the blind are in real trouble. Action is needed on all fronts:

At the national level, efforts will continue to be made to induce the Department of HEW to rescind its extra-legal ruling -- either administratively or by action of Congress at the next session. Every state affiliate, and each individual member, should contribute to these efforts by protesting in letters to their congressmen and senators against the federal ruling (HEW State Letter No. 582) which seeks to drag down Aid to the Blind and to destroy its distinctive features.

Within the states, every affiliate and member should work to prevent acceptance of the optional title XVI. In those states in which the legislature has established distinctive standards of assistance and qualifications for the blind, aged and disabled respectively, the main effort should be that of persuading the legislature to hold to those lines of distinction. In states where there are no special legislative safeguards for these individual programs, the task must be to work with the state administrators of welfare to prevent acquiescence in the illegitimate federal demand for a common standard.

We might well refer to this disastrous maneuver, not as "title XVI," but as "Snare 16." It represents nothing less than a potential death-trap for the program of Aid to the Blind -- a trap cleverly baited with a medical sugar-pill.

WORLD COUNCIL ANNOUNCES ANTI-NFB VOTE

The constitutional claim of the National Federation of the Blind for reinstatement in its elective seat on the executive committee of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind was officially rejected last August by action of the executive committee, according to the belatedly issued minutes of the committee's meeting in Hanover, Germany -- as well as to an official communication of mid-October from WCWB President E. A. Baker to NFB Delegate Dr. Jacobus tenBroek.

The NFB's appeal, which had been presented in person by Dr. tenBroek at Hanover before an "informal" session of the Council's executive committee, was turned down by subsequent vote of the committee in its regular secret session -- but without any notification of that fact to the NFB or its delegate until the President's letter of October 17, more than two months later.

The contested executive committee seat had been held by the NFB since 1959, when its delegate was elected to a five-year term by the World Assembly in his capacity as the representative of the Federation. That election gave the organized blind people of the United States their only direct representation on the World Council's executive committee -- with the remaining U. S. seats occupied by delegates of national agencies for the blind (The American Foundation for the Blind, American Foundation for Overseas Blind, and American Association of Workers for the Blind).

The controlling agency interests within the World Council -- spearheaded by President Baker, the recently retired, venerable director of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind -- suffered

this thorn in their side (the presence of a spokesman for the organized blind) until March of 1962 -- when the opportunity arose to remove it at a stroke. On the pretext that the NFB's seat had been "vacated" due to the resignation of its original delegate and the routine appointment of a successor, President Baker with the collaboration of the American agencies for the blind used the device of a North American postal ballot to reassign the seat to another agency representative.

The claim, subsequently pursued by the NFB for restoration of its executive committee membership, has centered on these main points:

1. The postal ballot was illegal and void, since the NFB's seat had not been and could not be vacated except through withdrawal of the NFB or the normal termination of its five-year tenure;

2. The president's action was unconstitutional, since committee seats are held by delegates acting not as individuals but in their official capacity as representatives of national agencies or organizations;

3. The agencies' ouster of the National Federation of the Blind is flagrantly inequitable and discriminatory, since organizations of the blind were already grossly under-represented in the World Council as opposed to agencies for the blind, and by this action the American blind in particular are deprived of any voice in the policy-making executive committee.

In addition to these points bearing on its own ejection, the NFB has urged the prompt reversal by the WCWB executive committee of the rule of secrecy surrounding its meetings, by means of which the public and even other WCWB members are barred from all such meetings.

Minutes Inaccurate.

The relevant portion of the newly released minutes of the August executive committee meeting reads as follows:

"At this point it was decided to adjourn the meeting.
... The members as individuals agreed to hear a complaint

raised by Dr. tenBroek of the United States delegation, who claimed that he should automatically succeed to Mr. Card's seat on the Executive Committee; this claim was not allowed by the U. S. delegation as a whole and had been refused by the officers of W.C.W.B. Members listened to Dr. tenBroek's exposition of his case and, after discussion, the Committee again met and resolved that Dr. tenBroek should be informed officially, 'that the Executive Committee had listened sympathetically to the statement made by Prof. Jacobus tenBroek but are satisfied with the legality of the actions taken. The Committee gives unreserved endorsement to the President's action in the matter.' This motion proposed by Mr. Christiansen, seconded by Mr. Wilson and the Begum Tyabji, was then adopted unanimously."

This official report of the executive committee proceedings is on its face inaccurate and uninformative in several particulars. The minutes provide no explanation whatsoever for the resort by the committee to the unusual and peculiar device of adjourning the meeting in order to listen to official business. Nor is the slightest indication given of the broad constitutional and legal grounds upon which the Federation's claim was rested.

The case presented by the NFB's delegate was not, of course, that he as an individual should succeed to a supposed seat held by Mr. Card as an individual, but that the seat constitutionally occupied by the NFB in the person of its delegate could not be taken away by virtue of a routine change of delegates -- any more than the United States' seat on the U. N. Security Council could be regarded as "vacated" when the President replaces one ambassador with another.

A positive inaccuracy in the official minutes is that "the Executive Committee had listened sympathetically" to Dr. tenBroek's 40-minute presentation of the NFB's case for reinstatement. In point of fact, the conduct of the Anglo-American agency delegates in particular was deliberately and calculatedly hostile during his address and throughout his stay in Hanover.

Another version of the Executive Committee action against the NFB (incidentally specifying activities not reported in the minutes of the meeting) was set forth in President Baker's letter to Dr. tenBroek, which officially conveyed the committee's decision 10 weeks after the event. His letter stated:

"All members of the Committee in formal meeting subsequent to your presentation expressed appreciation for the lucid statement of your point of view.

"Following a review of developments leading up to the nominations and election procedure to complete representation on the Executive Committee from the North American Region, formal resolution was adopted unanimously approving my procedure in the conduct of the election. While I was eligible to vote in the election to fill vacant North American seats, I did not do so. Six of the votes cast were for those elected and two only were cast otherwise.

"The Executive also decided unanimously that no action should now be taken on your request that Executive meetings should be open to non-members other than authorized translators for those unable to understand the official languages of the Council, i.e., French and English. It was recognized, however, that this decision would not be binding on future Executive Committees, each of which must reserve the right to institute its own rules of procedure, providing such rules do not violate the WCWB constitution."

The last paragraph of this communication is especially noteworthy as disclosing a decision of the executive committee which is nowhere to be found in the official minutes of the meeting. This disclosure gives new point and urgency to the NFB demand that the executive committee abolish its rule of secrecy. It also casts doubt upon the argument of M. R. Barnett, American agency official and member of the WCWB executive committee, seeking to justify the body's closed-meeting policy. In a letter of June 28, 1962, to Dr. tenBroek, Barnett replied to the NFB's charge that the executive committee session is "secret." His letter stated:

"This, in the connotation with which you used the word, is not true. Minutes of all executive committee meetings are routinely made available to all members of all national delegations. The action and/or policy decisions of the governing body are subject to the questions, comments and criticism of the total membership at the time of the General Assembly."

As indicated by Colonel Baker's communication, above, the minutes of executive committee meetings (whether or not they are made available) are far from reliable, accurate or fully informative.

Even if they were, however, it is to be noted that the questions, comments and criticism by the total membership of the 1962 executive committee meeting must await the convening of the 1964 General Assembly -- two years later.

LISTEN Eavesdrops -- With Partial Hearing.

A lengthy, but far from complete, "report" on the World Council controversy has been published in the latest (August 1962) issue of LISTEN, bi-monthly periodical of the Catholic Guild for the Blind of Boston. The magazine, which is usually studiously careful in presenting both sides of an issue objectively and impartially, is here seriously troubled with partial hearing. Its article chooses to regard the controversy not as a serious dispute over constitutional issues but as a "feud" or clash of personalities which had "simmered for some months" and reached a "boiling point" at Hanover. The NFB is said to "claim ownership" of the disputed seat rather than claiming only that it was elected to the seat; while the NFB's delegate assertedly made his way to the Hanover meeting "to state his dissatisfaction with opinions voiced about the situation" by officials of the World Council.

Curiously, the LISTEN article is as silent as the official minutes regarding the basic constitutional argument advanced by the NFB. While some of the conclusions of that argument are vaguely indicated, the case itself is reduced to terms more suggestive of individual ambition and rivalry. It is especially striking that no reference at all is made by LISTEN to the controversial (and surely newsworthy) demand by the National Federation that the WCWB executive committee abandon its practice of secret covenants secretly arrived at.

Among other distorted interpretations and interpolations, the LISTEN story conveys the impression that the NFB's original delegate, George Card, was elected to the committee seat as an individual only incidentally connected with the NFB "administration"; and that executive committee members "are elected along regional lines from among qualified delegations from regional areas. The Council governing committee is not composed of national organizations or agencies, LISTEN has gathered."

LISTEN, of course, has gathered erroneously. If, as the article itself states, Card became ineligible to serve on the executive committee after he was replaced as NFB delegate, it is only because he was no longer a representative of the organization to which the seat was assigned. Talk of "regional" as opposed to organizational representation cannot divert attention from the fact that (with the now-past exception of the NFB delegate) all U. S. representatives on the executive committee are officials of national agencies for the blind -- and are presumably not above reflecting the particular interests and viewpoints of those agencies.

That LISTEN itself can find little or no difference between the interests of professional agencies and those of democratic organizations of the blind is suggested by the following sentence: "Although reportedly a large majority of the 40 members of the World Council are themselves blind persons, the adverse decision on the Federation's claim has been termed by the NFB 'a severe blow' to 'blind Americans, and indeed to the blind of the world.'" The disparagement of the NFB's view which this is evidently intended to effect will not be persuasive to blind Americans whose right to organize their own associations independently of agency control has been bitterly contested over the years by agency officials both blind and sighted.

"As LISTEN goes to press," the article continued, "indications are that Dr. tenBroek may attempt to bring the question of the disputed committee seat and the constitutionality of this year's postal election to the attention of delegates at the next meeting of the World Council Assembly in 1964. In the light of the executive committee's policy that problems concerning credentials of national delegations are not the concern of the world body, it is questionable whether or not any further action will take place two years from now."

While it is doubtless within the competence of news reporters to speculate on possible future decisions of such bodies as the World Council Assembly, it may be wondered whether the above statement does not represent an effort to prejudge the issue and thus influence the decision. For the real issue which lies behind the NFB-WCWB dispute is, of course, not one of the "credentials of national organizations" but rather of the constitutionality and simple justice of presidential actions designed to eliminate a

member organization from the seat to which its delegate was elected by the Assembly itself. With all respect to LISTEN, it would seem difficult to single out any issue which strikes more immediately and fundamentally at the constitutional authority of the World Council Assembly.

A STATEMENT ON SHELTERED WORKSHOPS

By James McGinnis

(Editor's note: Following is the partial text of a statement presented by Mr. McGinnis, president of the California Council of the Blind, before the State Senate Fact Finding Committee on Governmental Administration during a San Francisco hearing on August 27, 1962. The committee hearing was confined to the subject, "Rehabilitation Workshops for the Handicapped -- Places of Work, or Places of Training?" The legislative inquiry reportedly was prompted by the anticipated introduction in the 1963 session of proposals that state funds be made available to non-profit sheltered workshops for rehabilitation and training of handicapped groups. Witnesses representing various disabled groups, including the blind, testified at the one-day hearing -- among them the Bay Counties' Post Polio Association, whose statement is re-printed below under "Brothers... & Others.")

The bills that have been referred to your committee propose to make state funds available in order to utilize private sheltered workshops for the rehabilitation of physically handicapped persons. We believe that the record shows that sheltered workshops are not suitable for the vocational rehabilitation of the blind.

There are a number of reasons for this conclusion. In the first place, sheltered workshops are generally set up to accomplish a number of other things besides vocational rehabilitation. These include terminal employment for handicapped persons, moral or

religious improvement of the workers, provision of social and recreational activities, and in some cases provision of residential facilities. These purposes tend to be mutually inconsistent and are not calculated to bring about intensive concentration on rehabilitation techniques that are required to make vocational rehabilitation successful.

Virtually all sheltered workshops produce articles that are sold in commerce. The revenues from these sales are a significant source of revenues for the shops, and in some cases constitute the entire income of the agency. The rehabilitation of the worker, however, means that he is not available for high production and also means that supervisors are distracted from the goal of higher production. The result has been that the rehabilitation efforts suffer.

Further, the rehabilitation of workers means their placement in competitive employment outside the workshop. This means that the most efficient workers must be lost from the production line. The record shows that this has been sufficient to discourage intensive rehabilitation activities by workshops. For the temptation to retain the more productive workers and achieve increased sales income is too great for most workshop management.

One of the most important aspects of rehabilitation is the psychological climate in which the person to be rehabilitated is placed. By virtue of their use for terminal employment, sheltered workshops include among their workers many who are discouraged and defeated -- who have sought jobs in competitive employment and failed to get them, or who have been too discouraged even to try. The sheltered workshop, therefore, greets the prospective rehabilitant with attitudes calculated to discourage him rather than to encourage him to make the intense efforts that are required for rehabilitation.

We believe that the record also shows that most private sheltered workshops as presently constituted are unsuitable even for terminal employment. Wages are exceptionally low, far below federal and state minimum wage requirements. Workers lack organizations of their own, the right of collective bargaining, Social Security or other retirement benefits, unemployment insurance, disability insurance, and many of the other standard

benefits afforded to American workers. Even for those who are unable to participate in competitive employment, standards of private workshops are so low as to make them an undesirable environment for these workers.

The views that we have expressed are shared by outstanding authorities in work for the blind throughout the country. On many issues, we have had bitter disagreements with the American Foundation for the Blind. It is, however, the leading spokesman of agencies for the blind with an extensive research staff, and it has given careful attention to the problems of sheltered workshops. In an editorial in the October, 1960, issue of "The New Outlook for the Blind" (Vol. 54, p. 294), the publication of the American Foundation for the Blind, the following conclusions are reached:

"...we in work for the blind must deal effectively and forcefully with the workshop question... because it can be a decisive step in fighting an epidemic which threatens the basic premise of vocational rehabilitation for all severely handicapped persons, including the blind.

"The growth of the sheltered workshop movement in general threatens to wipe out the gains which rehabilitation has made in the past twenty years by reinforcing the archaic and retrogressive idea that segregated employment is the best way of dealing with the problem of the handicapped in our society. Perhaps we can help the others to avoid a step which can only lead to stultification. In our own self-interest, we must.

"We must question the use of a sheltered workshop as a place of terminal employment for handicapped persons who should be working in industry.

"We must question the use of sheltered workshops for vocational rehabilitation training when there are well-equipped public and private vocational and trade schools in the community, and we must also ask why on-the-job training programs in industry are not developed more frequently.

"The workshop syndrome is an illness in our

society which has many related symptoms -- satisfaction with the status quo, ineptness, lassitude, lack of imagination, unwillingness to exercise authority, and the tendency to take the easy way out. . . ."

Similar views are expressed in Hope Deferred by Jacobus tenBroek and Floyd W. Matson. Dr. tenBroek is Chairman of the State Social Welfare Board and President of the American Brotherhood for the Blind. Chapter 12 of this definitive book on work for the blind deals with sheltered workshops. Its conclusions are as follows:

" the evidence of history and contemporary practice alike is compelling against the proposition that sheltered workshops can adequately combine the functions of competitive rehabilitation training and terminal employment in non-competitive and routinized tasks. In a kind of Gresham's law, the negative and regressive features . . . tend to drive out the democratic and progressive purposes of freely chosen vocational objectives and enlightened training procedures aimed at social integration and personal independence.

"There is more than one way in which this tendency is manifested. Most important, perhaps, is the fact that sheltered workshops, by virtue of their very existence as segregated outlets of special employment, are an encouragement to permanent placement of the disabled within them.

"It should require little demonstration that the very concept of vocational rehabilitation is logically inconsistent with the static philosophy of sheltered employment. Whatever the justification for workshops with regard to those individuals clearly beyond rehabilitation, it seems remarkable that anyone should suggest their use for the majority of disabled persons plainly capable of full restoration to productive employment. . . ."

Dr. Jacobus tenBroek is also the author of a comprehensive review of selected workshop statutes throughout the country entitled "Character and Function of Sheltered Workshops for the

Blind: A Review of State Statutes" prepared in June, 1960. After analysis of the various State laws, Dr. tenBroek concludes that the functions assigned to sheltered workshops are mutually inconsistent. In particular, attempts to utilize sheltered workshops as rehabilitation facilities are frustrated by the function of sheltered workshops in supplying terminal employment. Copy of this article is attached.

On the other hand, California Industries for the Blind is a State-operated, sheltered workshop program. Although progress has often been slow, the California Council of the Blind has for the past several years been working with the State Department of Education to improve working conditions in the three shops. These shops provide employment to several hundred blind persons. The Department of Education has not tried to jumble rehabilitation with their other functions. This is, instead, handled by a special agency within the department. Although wages are still far from adequate, the department is making steadfast endeavors to make these shops more suitable for the furnishing of employment to blind workers.

In the last several years, the Council has sponsored, with the support of the Department of Education, legislation that has made available to the workers in the State shops benefits of Social Security and unemployment and disability insurance. It has also successfully carried through legislation setting standards for products labeled as "blind-made". In addition, the Council has successfully sponsored legislation that has eliminated the status of State shop workers as wards of the State and established that they are State employees for all purposes except appointment by competitive Civil Service examination. We are continuing to work with the Department of Education for the improvement of these shops, for we have travelled only a small distance along the road to making them desirable places of employment.

Our conclusion is that private sheltered shops are not suitable places for carrying out the vocational rehabilitation of blind workers and generally are not even suitable for terminal employment of the blind. There is no question, however, but that additional steps are needed for vocational rehabilitation of the blind. If State funds are to be made available for this purpose, they should not be dissipated in the fruitless endeavor to utilize private sheltered workshops, but should be utilized either to improve our State rehabilitation services for the blind or to improve conditions in the California Industries for the Blind.

NATIONAL BRAILLE MUSIC LIBRARY SET

"Educational, vocational and cultural opportunities" for the blind in the field of music have been signally advanced by enactment of a new law (P.L. 87-7615) establishing a library of braille musical scores and related materials in the Library of Congress.

The legislation, signed into law by President Kennedy on October 9, calls for the music library to be housed in the Library of Congress's Division for the Blind and to be available on a loan basis across the nation to blind musicians, teachers and students.

After the first year of operation the library program will require the establishment of two new positions -- a reference librarian and a braille instructor -- with the latter position officially described as open to blind applicants.

Sponsored cooperatively by the National Federation of the Blind and other major organizations and agencies engaged in work for the blind, the music library proposal was introduced into Congress in identical bills by Senator Wayne Morse of Oregon and Representative Robert J. Corbett of Pennsylvania. John Nagle, the NFB's Washington representative, called on all members of the Senate and House committees which had jurisdiction over the measure and also talked with committee staff. The result of this organized preparation was that both congressional committees approved the bill without the usual requirement of public hearings or even a request for supporting statements from interested groups and persons.

In its report to Congress on the project, the Division for the Blind of the Library of Congress pointed out that no adequate collection of braille musical scores presently exists in this country and that blind musicians and students have therefore been forced to rely largely on volunteers to transcribe their required material into braille. The proposed centralized collection and planning will, it was said, "result in an improved and expanded service to the segment of the blind population seriously interested in music. It is not known how large this group is now, or the extent to which it will grow when it becomes known that resources are available."

The report described the two new civil service positions as

follows: "A reference librarian with a knowledge of music to select, acquire, organize, maintain, and answer reference inquiries on the on the collection; and a braille instructor with a knowledge of music and the braille music code, to instruct sighted volunteers. The braille instructor could be a blind person, and the position is essential since most requests for music will involve material not available from any source other than being transcribed on order."

THE 87TH CONGRESS: IN MEMORIAM

By John F. Nagle

(Editor's note: Mr. Nagle is the chief of the Washington office of the National Federation of the Blind.)

The heaviest legislative load yet shouldered by the federated blind has been carried, with striking success if not in total triumph, through the hectic two-year session of the 87th Congress which adjourned in October.

During this period the NFB provided inspiration and support for some 31 separate bills and presented oral testimony on eight different occasions. Throughout the session we also continued our cooperative relationship with the American Association of Workers for the Blind, and on occasion with the American Foundation for the Blind, the American Association of Instructors of the Blind, the Blinded Veterans Association, and the National Rehabilitation Association.

Some of the highlights of organized activity and advance on the Congressional front have included:

1. Public assistance: Among the definite gains for the blind enacted in connection with the Public Welfare Amendments of 1962 (covered in detail in previous issues of THE BLIND AMERICAN) are the permanent approval of the Missouri-Pennsylvania programs; a one-year exemption of additional income and resources useful in a plan of rehabilitation; the incentive consideration of expenses

incident to employment, and the \$5 increase of federal funds per recipient.

2. Passage of the American Printing House amending bill removed the previous ceiling on educational appropriations and made immediately possible an expenditure of \$40 (as opposed to \$25) annually for the books and instructional materials needed by each blind child at the primary and secondary school levels.

3. The new law authorizing reader-assistants for blind employees of the federal government (see THE BLIND AMERICAN, September 1962) opens up broad new employment opportunities, as well as assistance for those employed, in the civil service field.

4. The establishment of a braille music library in the Library of Congress provides blind Americans for the first time with a national library of musical scores and literature (see story elsewhere in this issue).

5. New postal changes favoring the blind were enacted which among other things make possible the free mailing of sight-saving books, extends that privilege to transcribing and recording activities for the blind, and incorporates a distinctive recognition of organizations of (as well as those for) the blind.

In addition to these concrete gains, an encouraging step toward improvement of the Randolph-Sheppard Act governing the vending stand program -- more specifically, toward meeting the threat of vending machines -- was taken through Senate committee hearings this summer on an amending bill introduced by Senator Jennings Randolph. Although the bill fell short of Congressional action, it exposed the inadequacy and stagnation of administrative processes and paved the way for the reforms that are demonstrably necessary.

Recognition that wage and working conditions in sheltered workshops are generally below minimum acceptable standards was officially and emphatically expressed in the course of an investigation conducted in 1961 by the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare -- which thereby gave impetus to our campaign for extension to the workshops of the minimum-wage requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

There were other notable Congressional developments bearing

promise of future fruition -- among them Congressman Giaimo's bill (H. R. 10125) designed to provide across-the-board federal assistance to state programs for special education of exceptional (handicapped) children. And there were also, of course, portentous developments -- such as the emergence of Title XVI and the passage of the ominous work-relief requirement for ADC recipients. During the past Congressional session, moreover, the hue and cry of the anti-welfare pack in Washington and across the nation, reached its highest pitch of stridency and hysteria.

But most important of all to blind Americans have been the solid strides taken during the 87th Congress in the direction of enlightened welfare and reasonable security provisions, along with the impressively mounting respect and attentiveness accorded to their national federation and its legislative objectives. At this juncture of our organized movement we need not settle for the prophecy of the political satirist who recently entitled his book "The Future Lies Ahead." Instead we may declare with confidence that our future more than ever lies in our own hands -- and in our collective effort.

ROUNDUP OF STATE CONVENTIONS

Alabama Federation.

"An unusually high spirit of harmony, cooperation and enthusiasm" characterized the annual convention of the Alabama Federation of the Blind held at Birmingham October 12-14, according to Donald C. Capps, Second vice-president of the National Federation of the Blind and chief speaker at the AFB's convention banquet. A total of 102 members were in attendance at the banquet festivities.

Re-elected to new term of office were: President, Mrs. Eulassee Hardenbergh of Birmingham; First vice-president, Roger Smith, of Montgomery; Second vice-president, Calvin Wooten, of Anniston; Secretary, Mrs. Dora M. Harris, of Montgomery, and Treasurer, Mrs. Burlie K. Dutton, of Birmingham.

Highlighting the active weekend of business and social events was a Sunday legislative breakfast featuring two state legislators, Senator Lawrence Dumas and Representative J. Paul Meets, Jr. Congressman George Huddleston, although unable to leave Washington during the extended Congressional session, was represented at the breakfast by his administrative assistant who read a speech prepared by the Congressman for the event.

Among the numerous other convention speakers were E. H. Gentry, President of the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind; George G. McFaden, assistant supervisor of Alabama's vocational rehabilitation service, and Bill Countryman, field representative for the Leader Dog School for the Blind of Rochester, Michigan.

Associated Blind of Massachusetts.

The First Annual Dr. Jacobus tenBroek Award, sponsored by the Associated Blind of Massachusetts, was presented to the ABM's Worcester chapter during last month's convention of the Associated Blind of Massachusetts held in Worcester. The citation was conferred for the notable work of the Worcester group in establishing a memorial fund for the furtherance of diabetic research. Manuel Rubin, ABM president, delivered the presentation speech.

Main speaker at the convention banquet was John F. Nagle, the NFB's chief Washington representative, who also reported to the meeting on the progress of federal legislative goals and participated in a panel discussion on legislation.

The ABM convention unanimously adopted a resolution urging the governor to reappoint the present director of the state's division of the blind, John Mungovan, upon expiration of his term next year. In another unanimous action the delegates reaffirmed the ABM's pledge of cooperation with and loyalty to the National Federation of the Blind.

Nevada Federation.

Mrs. Audrey Bascom of Las Vegas was re-elected to the presidency of the Nevada Federation of the Blind at the Federation's October 11 convention at Reno. Other officers selected by the NFB's

state affiliate include: first vice-president, K. O. Knudson, Las Vegas; second vice-president, Catherine Callahan, Reno; secretary, Gus Reapsaet, Las Vegas; treasurer, Jim Ellis, Boulder City, and Chaplain, Nellie Reich, Las Vegas. The following board members were also elected: Catherine Callahan; Carl Klontz, Hawthorne; Louise Long, Las Vegas, and Jimmy Lee Washington, Las Vegas. Audrey Bascom was named to be chief delegate to the national convention, with Louise Long as alternate delegate.

Among the many authoritative and influential guest speakers at the convention were Governor Grant Sawyer; Senator Howard Cannon, who delivered the opening address; Bruce Barnum, head of the Nevada state employment service, and John Ruize, chief of the bureau of services for the blind.

The convention banquet was highlighted by a pair of outstanding speeches: one by John F. Nagle, chief of the NFB's Washington office, and the other by Tim Seward, administrative assistant to Nevada Congressman Walter Baring.

California Council.

Two hundred delegates gathered at Los Angeles' Alexandria Hotel October 19-21 for the semi-annual convention of the California Council of the Blind (state affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind). A highlight of the meeting was the presentation of the NFB's Newel Perry Award (conferred in 1961) to Congressman Cecil R. King, author of the justly famous King Bill and longtime champion of blind welfare. The award was presented by Dr. Jacobus tenBroek, president of the American Brotherhood for the Blind and past president of the NFB, whose speech cited the many contributions by Congressman King over the past 30 years -- both as a state legislator and as an outstanding member of the House of Representatives.

James McGinnis of Los Angeles was re-elected to the Council presidency for a two-year term, accompanied by the following slate of officers: first vice-president, Anthony Mannino, Los Angeles; second vice-president, Yvonne Eick, San Diego; secretary, James B. Garfield, Los Angeles; treasurer, Sybil Westbrook, Sacramento. Board members elected include: Jules Basse, San Francisco; Russell Kletzing, Sacramento; Elmer Chapson, Berkeley, and Charles Galloway, Martinez. The convention also named Mrs. Beverly Gladden to the Council's legislative representative at the

state capital during the next session.

Among the numerous activities on the convention agenda was an informative panel discussion focused on employment opportunities for the blind, conducted by Perry Sundquist, head of state aid to the blind; NFB President Kletzing, and Dr. tenBroek.

Colorado Federation.

The eighth annual convention of the Colorado Federation of the Blind was held in Denver on October 27. The packed schedule of business and social activity included a panel discussion on job opportunities featuring the following participants: Charles Ritter, chief of state rehabilitation services for the blind; Bryant Moore, placement specialist with the Colorado division of services for the blind; John F. Nagle, chief Washington representative of the National Federation of the Blind, and Marvin Milan, first vice-president of the Denver Area Association of the Blind.

In the only elections of the convention, CFB President Clifford E. Jensen was chosen to represent the state group at the Philadelphia convention of the NFB next summer, with Mrs. Ethel Mahaney as alternate delegate.

The main banquet address -- entitled "To Be a Federationist" -- was delivered by Mr. Nagle, who also presented a detailed report on Washington legislative activity to the afternoon session.

Indiana Council.

Senator Vance Hartke of Indiana received the 1960 Newel Perry Award of the National Federation of the Blind in ceremonies highlighting the annual convention of the Indiana Council of the Blind in Evansville October 5-7. The award was presented by the National Federation's Washington office chief, John Nagle, who delivered a detailed and well-deserved tribute to the Indiana Senator.

The convention heard a variety of reports and talks from state and national officials, among them Mrs. Maud Ward of the Indiana Welfare Department, who discussed the state's plans for implementing the new public assistance amendments; and Mr. Nagle, who reported on federal legislative developments during the 87th Congress.

Ray Dinsmore was elected as Indiana's delegate to the NFB's national convention in 1963. A glowing tribute to this year's Detroit convention was voiced by Delegate John Jansen.

A NEW BREAK-THROUGH ON RESIDENCE LAWS?

An electoral reform of potentially broad significance is gathering momentum under the spur of two prominent legal groups, according to a recent editorial in THE NEW YORK TIMES. Both the American Bar Association and the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws were said to be working for the enactment by every state of a law permitting a citizen to vote for President and Vice President "no matter how recent his residence in the state," so long as he met the state's other qualifications for voting and had been qualified to vote in his previous state.

Observing that the aim of these and other legal agencies fighting for the reform is "to prevent the disfranchisement in a Presidential election of many million of voters whose only disqualification is moving from one state to another shortly before the election," the TIMES noted that such a law presently exists in only four states -- with all the rest imposing residence requirements ranging from 54 days (California) to two years (Alabama, Mississippi and South Carolina).

The editorial concluded: "Presumably the residence requirements rest on the premise that a voter ought to be familiar with regional attitudes before he can take a fully informed stand on whom he will support for the Presidency. The argument might have had some basis at a time when families were less mobile and communications less swift, but it is insupportable now. "The United States is more than ever a nation, made so by the increasing mobility of its people (some 6,000,000 Americans move from one state to another in a year) and by the prompt airing that questions of national import receive in every corner of the land."

The moral of this authoritative editorial clearly is that state-bound requirements of residence make little sense in the modern age with respect to national elections. It might well be asked whether such archaic legal barriers make any more sense with respect to national issues of welfare and public assistance. The blind along with other aided groups might well take heart at this portent of a coming break-through in the iron curtain of state residence laws; but they might also take umbrage at the apparent fact that national welfare groups are exerting themselves less concertedly and effectively toward this end in their own field than are the legal organizations in the area of electoral reform.

BROTHERS . . . & OTHERS

Illinois Crackdown on Welfare Clients. Recipients of public aid in Illinois will be required to get rid of "unnecessary" telephones, TV and hi-fi sets, home freezers and other "costly and unessential items," according to a recent dispatch by the Associated Press. A spokesman for the Illinois Public Aid Commission was reported to have announced that directives were being sent out to that effect to all case workers dealing with the state's 460,000 welfare clients.

The orders were said to stem from a new policy of cracking down on spending because the state is running low on relief funds, the AP story noted. Telephone service will apparently be permitted only when it is essential to work or there is long-term illness which would make necessary emergency doctor calls, it was said. Failure or refusal to discontinue such service, according to the directive, "shall result in immediate discontinuance of the public assistance grant."

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Book Rental Fees Reduced. Rental fee reductions which reportedly will bring a 50-percent saving to its members were announced recently by "Best-Selling Books for the Blind, Inc.," a

nonprofit corporation in the business of renting tape-recorded books. According to the announcement, basic rental for books will be reduced to 25¢ per hour of recorded reading, and paid advance orders totalling 100 hours or more (\$25) will receive a 10-percent discount. Details, including a catalog and application form, may be received by writing to the organization at Phoenix, Maryland.

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Congress and THE BLIND AMERICAN. An article by the editor of THE BLIND AMERICAN -- "Medicare: HEW Against Itself" (June 1962) -- was placed in THE CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on October 1 by Congressman Thomas B. Curtis, of Missouri, who also made it the subject of a statement with respect to the Administration's public welfare program. Congressman Curtis, who has long championed the viewpoint of the organized blind in all phases of public welfare, declared in part:

"If a means test, as liberal a test as it is under Kerr-Mills, is a pauper's oath and subject to scorn by those truly interested in human welfare, it should be as much so in one area of public welfare as any other. We find, interestingly, that in other fields the line of the Department [of HEW] is just the opposite from that which it states in the Kerr-Mills situation. I note especially the matter of aid for the blind, and for substantiation I am placing in the RECORD at the end of this statement an article from the June issue of THE BLIND AMERICAN by Mr. Floyd Matson. The article, in the magazine which is published by the American Brotherhood for the Blind, is entitled 'Medicare: HEW Against Itself.' It shows how the Department, in its administration of social security, blows hot and cold on means tests, taking totally inconsistent stands in dealing with one program and then another."

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ICEBY Convention. The 1962 meeting of the International Conference of Educators of Blind Youth was held during August in Hanover, Germany, with some 400 persons in attendance. Dr. Edward J. Waterhouse, director of Perkins School for the Blind (U.S.), was elected chairman of the worldwide educational group; Tore Gissler of Sweden was chosen as vice chairman, and K. N. K. Jassawala of India became secretary. An executive committee was

elected comprising representatives from all parts of the world, with greater participation on the part of Asian and African nations. Resolutions passed by the conference reflected particular concern over low standards of schooling and socioeconomic opportunity for blind youth in most countries.

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"Bette White, like Jackie Robinson of baseball fame, would surely be a member of the Blind Hall of Fame if one existed," according to the ALUMNI NEWSLETTER of the Oakland (California) Orientation Center for the Blind. Expressing belief that Miss White is the first blind Negro teacher to be hired in the state public schools, the newsletter noted that "this brings the total number of blind teachers who are OOCB alumni to 13 -- a lucky number -- all teaching in the public schools of California. Nine of these are totally blind and all but four are teaching sighted children," the journal declared.

"Bette, also like Jackie, has achieved her goal because of her tremendous desire to succeed, dogged determination and great courage. In spite of many disappointments and obstacles, she cleared the final hurdle this summer when she signed a contract to teach a resource class at Highland School in Vallejo."

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Agencies for Blind Merge. Two separate mergers of agencies for the blind -- one in Philadelphia and the other in Brooklyn -- have taken place in recent months. The Brooklyn move involves the Industrial Home for the Blind and the Brooklyn Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, which have consolidated their services and facilities under the new name of "The Industrial Home for the Blind." In a joint announcement accompanying the merger, AICP President Robert G. Siebold and IHB President Henry S. Conover pointed out that "the best elements of the two programs could now be carried forward with greater economy and efficiency than before, and the fine traditions of both agencies begun by the early civic leaders would be upheld."

The Philadelphia action brings together the Philadelphia Working Home for the Blind and the Philadelphia Association for the

Blind, with the new designation to be "The Pennsylvania Working Home and the Philadelphia Association for the Blind." The joint operation of the two agencies will include the merging of physical plants and services, to be completed within the next year or more. The merger was said to reflect a present trend toward combining private health and welfare services within single organizations.

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NFB Lauded. The principle of national federation on the part of blind people was assessed recently in a thoughtful editorial by Sandford E. Allerton, president of the Michigan Council of the Blind and editor of the Council's periodical, the MCB BULLETIN. Citing the maxim that ideas move the world, Allerton observed: "It follows that conflicting ideas often cause battles, which may or may not be resolved. The education and progress of blind people which has been going on for some years now, gives impetus to self-expression and the heretical notion that they can in some measure govern their own future."

What is at issue, he wrote in the BULLETIN editorial, is whether present professional methods of assistance and training are adequate to the need. "Are blind people to take their place in normal industrial life or are they to be herded into workshops like cattle? Are the blind to be trained in what is supposed to be professionally good for them or are they to have some voice in the imaginative arts of living? The difference may be in weaving rugs or selling stock, in operating news stands or conducting a regular business. These are far above the glimpse of 'Hind Sight.' "

"The challenge of the National Federation involved imagination, which has something to do with the independence of the individual. It fails to put the blind in one class and the sighted in another. It is an organized idea that recognizes the potential capability of all. It is the idea which has moved the world of the blind forward. If it is critical of stagnation, it is also constructive. It is even inspirational and almost religious. It is the voice from the slums which says 'I shall work again.' "

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Backward Step in Illinois. The Illinois Legislative Advisory Committee to the State Public Aid Commission reportedly has voted

to recommend again to the state legislature a bill to extend from one to two years the residence requirements for eligibility to public aid programs. According to the legislative bulletin FROM THE STATE CAPITALS, the advisory group also approved a proposal to strengthen laws whereby Illinois may work with other states in mutual arrangements to force "responsible relatives" to help bear the cost of providing for persons receiving assistance in the state.

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"Life in My Hands." An autobiography by a deaf-blind Englishman who has successfully surmounted his combined handicaps has been published by a London publisher (Heinemann, 1960) under the title Life in My Hands. The book's author, Wally Thomas, tells the story of his fruitful life since being wounded in World War II. Married and with three grown children, Mr. Thomas today is working for an engineering firm and planning a new career in the field of writing.

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SEEING EYE Sees Red. It may be (we are not quite sure) that apologies are due The Seeing Eye, Inc., of Morristown, New Jersey. In our August issue (pp. 25-26), we noted that this well-known dog-guide agency was mounting an urgent campaign to warn the public against false rumors that tags and coupons might help to furnish Seeing Eye dogs to blind persons. Having quoted the agency's journal at length in this connection, we went on to point out that these "rumors" might not be altogether false, since at least one other guide-dog organization definitely makes use of dog-food labels as a means of fund-raising. Our subsequent caution to the Seeing Eye agency not to fulminate against the "false rumors" without making the necessary qualifications seemed to us both modest and appropriate; but unfortunately it has struck officials of The Seeing Eye as both "confused" and confusing.

In a recent letter to the editor, George Werntz, Jr., Seeing Eye's Executive vice-president and secretary, has asserted that "THE BLIND AMERICAN appears to be confused in implying that THE SEEING EYE GUIDE article denied a dog guide could be obtained from any organization through some form of redemption process." Noting that the GUIDE article "refers only to Seeing

Eye dogs," the letter goes on to say that "the Seeing Eye would be the last to deny the existence of other dog guide organizations or that a variety of fund-raising methods are used to support them. However, speaking only for The Seeing Eye, Inc., collections of cellophane strips, tea-bag tags, foodcan labels, bottle tops, and the like are not redeemable and will prove of no value to qualified blind persons desiring our service. This was the very obvious point of THE GUIDE article, and it puzzles us that your writer should have missed it by so wide a margin."

Since our aim is only to serve our readers, we are sincerely regretful whenever it goes wide of the mark. But in the present case there may be some room for doubt. The point that seems "very obvious" to The Seeing Eye is not, we fear, quite so obvious to the public mind. The fact is that the phrase "Seeing Eye dog" is simply synonymous, for a good many people, with the general term "guide dog" -- in much the same way as "Jello" has come to be identified with all brands of gelatin dessert. However devout the intention, therefore, warnings to the public condemning those false rumors about the connection between labels and "Seeing Eye dogs" -- without spelling out the distinctions involved -- may easily be misunderstood and consequently be unfortunate in their effect.

At any rate, this was the obvious point of THE BLIND AMERICAN article, and it puzzles us that The Seeing Eye should have missed it by so wide a margin.

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Employer Award to Pan Am. The Paralyzed Veterans of America recently announced selection of Pan American Airways as "Employer of the Year -- 1962." At ceremonies in New York City, John Farkas, national president of the veterans' group, presented a scroll to John S. Woodbridge, Pan Am comptroller, citing the airline's "outstanding record in the employment of paraplegics and other physically handicapped persons." Pan Am's program for employment of the disabled was previously recognized when the Federation of the Handicapped presented its community service award to the airline for the efforts it has made to create goodwill throughout the world on behalf of those physically impaired. Also, in 1960, the President's Committee on Employment of the Physically Handicapped cited the company for its contribution "through the adoption of progressive employment policies and through its recreation programs."

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NRA Meets in Detroit. Among events of particular interest to blind persons taking place at the October conference of the National Rehabilitation Association was a special panel discussion on "Blindness in 1990--U.S.A." Moderated by Kathern F. Gruber of the American Foundation for the Blind, the panel brought together Irvin P. Schloss, speaking on federal legislation; Peter J. Salmon, discussing the functions of voluntary agencies, and William F. Gallagher, talking from the "Viewpoint of the Blind Adult." The discussion centered on new concepts and challenges in rehabilitation of the blind, thus carrying out a major theme of the NRA conference.

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Handicapped Publication Opposes Workshops. THE SPOKESMAN, a quarterly journal published by the Bay Counties (San Francisco) Post-Polio Association, is finding widening reader interest among persons with varying physical handicaps. Edited by Charles Lyor and Emanuel Leplin, THE SPOKESMAN is a sprightly ten-page magazine both imaginatively edited and artfully illustrated. That it has a seriously reflective side as well was revealed by its publication recently of the Association's reply to a query of the California Senate Fact-Finding Committee with respect to sheltered workshops. "The consensus at our last meeting," according to the journal, "was that:

"1) Sheltered workshops as currently constituted are of little or no benefit to the post-polio.

"2) The public funds requested for support of sheltered workshops could be more advantageously used as follows: (a) On behalf of post-polios as grants to private industry for on-the-job training and employment of selected persons; (b) For expansion of vocational rehabilitation services to the severely disabled whose goals are somewhat less than economic self-sufficiency, and to the severely disabled with a progressive disease, but with a reasonable life expectancy.

"3) The objectives of sheltered workshops should be realistically formulated and the purposes which many of these facilities claim for themselves, of preparing the disabled person for competitive employment, are only too frequently not realized.

"4) Categories be established by objectives for workshops so that, for example, those that are purely terminal in nature could be supported by public funds on that basis without having to claim for themselves objectives that could rarely, if ever, be realized -- such as competitive employment."

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BVA Presents Award. David Schnair of New York was the recipient of the Irving Diener Award of the Blinded Veterans Association at its 17th National Convention recently. The award was established to honor annually the member who has given the most outstanding service to the BVA. Schnair, the first to receive the citation, is a longtime board member of the veterans' group and its representative to the United National and the World Veterans' Federation.

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"2 for 1" Rate on Greyhound. A "two for one" reduced fare plan for the blind has been put into effect by Greyhound Bus Lines, according to an article in THE WHITE CANE, monthly publication of the Washington State Association of the Blind. The plan, simply stated, means that two can travel for a single fare. Rules regulating the reduced rate reportedly are:

"First, the blind person must secure travel coupons, or certificates, together with an identification card. Such coupons are good for the entire calendar year. A coupon is given to the issuing ticket agent upon buying the 'party ticket.' " Coupons are said to be obtainable from the American Foundation for the Blind, Inc., 15 W. 16th Street, New York 11; the Braille Institute of America, Inc., 741 N. Vermont Avenue, Los Angeles 27; or the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, 929 Bayview Avenue, Toronto 17, Ontario.

The article notes that a blind child between 5 and 12 years of age may travel with a sighted attendant at the "children's rate" fixed at 75 percent of the adult fare. However, the special rate for blind travelers does not apply to local travel, defined as a one-way fare of 35 cents or less or a round-trip fare of 70 cents or less, the writer points out.

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World Council Assembly Meeting. The 1964 World Assembly meeting of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind will be held in New York City August 1-12, 1964, according to official minutes of the recent WCWB executive committee meeting which voted approval of the schedule.

The World Council's executive body also designated "The Problems of the Blind in a Changing World" as the central theme of the 1964 Assembly, which was expected to deal broadly with all aspects of blind welfare.

A steering committee was elected to supervise arrangements for the World Assembly sessions. Members of the committee are: J. Christiansen, Chairman; Max Woolley, J. C. Colligan, M. R. Barnett, K. Dassanaiké, M. Cadavid-Alvarez, Abede Kabede, and (as ex officio members) John Jarvis and Eric Boulter. Persons with program ideas for the Assembly's agenda should contact this committee.

(For other important actions taken by the World Council's executive committee at its August meeting in Hanover, Germany, see above, "World Council Announces Anti-NFB Vote.")

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